

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 071506
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY EA:RHOLBROOKE:CCH
APPROVED BY EA:RICHARD HOLBROOKE
S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN

-----312106Z 107481 /61

R 312037Z MAR 77 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
INFO WHITE HOUSE

S E C R E T STATE 071506

NODIS
FOR AMBASSADOR NEWSOM FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ID

SUBJECT: INDONESIA BAN ON NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE

1. I HAVE RECEIVED FOLLOWING LETTER FROM BOB CHRISTOPHER,
EDITOR OF NEWSWEEK INTERNATIONAL:

QUOTE: THE PROBLEM INVOLVED IS NOT ONLY ONE OF MAJOR
IMPORTANCE TO NEWSWEEK INTERNATIONAL BUT ULTIMATELY
POSES A THREAT TO ALL AMERICAN-BASED PUBLICATIONS THAT
CIRCULATE ABROAD OR ATTEMPT TO COVER THE INTERNATIONAL
SCENE.

THE BACKGROUND, BRIEFLY, IS AS FOLLOWS: ON NOVEMBER 8,
1976, NEWSWEEK INTERNATIONAL RAN A COVER STORY ON INDO-
NESIA WHICH DEALT IN PART WITH THE PERVASIVENESS OF
CORRUPTION IN THAT COUNTRY, INCLUDING SPECIFIC CASES OF
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 071506

CORRUPTION IN PRESIDENT SUHARTO'S OWN FAMILY. IN ALL
THE BROUHAHA THAT HAS ENSUED, NO INDONESIAN OFFICIAL HAS
DENIED THE ACCURACY OF OUR REPORTING. (THEY COULDN'T
SINCE MOST OF THE INCIDENTS WE CITED WERE COMMON KNOWLEDGE
IN JAKARTA). NONETHELESS, THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT
PROMPTLY PROHIBITED ANY FURTHER CIRCULATION OF NEWSWEEK
IN THAT COUNTRY, BARRED ALL NEWSWEEK CORRESPONDENTS FROM

ENTERING INDONESIA AND PRESSURED OUR LONG TIME STRINGER

THERE INTO RESIGNING. AND THERE, FOUR MONTHS LATER, THE SITUATION STILL STANDS.

THERE ARE, I AM RELIABLY INFORMED, TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT ABOUT ALL THIS WITHIN THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT. ONE, HEADED BY ADAM MALIK, WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE BAN ON SEVER NEWSWEEK AND ITS CORRESPONDENTS LIFTED. THE OTHER -- AND MORE POWERFUL -- GROUP IS LED BY ADMIRAL SUDOMO WHO INSISTS THAT WE MUST TAKE "DISCIPLINARY ACTION" AGAINST RICK SMITH, WHO FILED THE STORY, AND PUBLICLY APOLOGIZE FOR RUNNING IT. (WE HAVE ALREADY, IN AN UNPRECEDENTED -- AND PERHAPS UNWISE -- GESTURE, PUBLICLY STATED THAT WE MEANT NO PERSONAL OFFENSE TO SUHARTO).

IN THIS SITUATION, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT JUDICIOUS PRESSURE BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT MIGHT WELL TIP THE SCALES IN FAVOR OF MALIK. INDONESIA, AFTER ALL, BADLY NEEDS U.S. COOPERATION IN ROLLING OVER ITS FOREIGN DEBTS AND URGENTLY WANTS ADDITIONAL U.S. INVESTMENT -- AND ANY HINT THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT MIGHT IMPEDE ACHIEVEMENT OF THOSE TWO GOALS WOULD, I AM CONVINCED, CAUSE SOME NERVOUS RE-THINKING IN JAKARTA.

DEVOTED AS I AM TO NEWSWEEK'S INTERESTS, I WOULD NOT SUGGEST THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT PUT HEAT ON INDONESIA PURELY FOR OUR COMMERCIAL BENEFIT. BUT, IN MY VIEW, THERE IS MUCH MORE THAN THAT INVOLVED. FREEDOM OF
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 071506

ACCESS TO INFORMATION IS AN INDISPENSABLE ASPECT OF FREEDOM IN GENERAL. BY ITS PRESENT CONDUCT, THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT IS DENYING SEVERAL THOUSAND OF ITS CITIZENS ACCESS TO WHAT HAS BEEN THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE WORLD. (YOU SURE CAN'T FIND OUT WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON ANYWHERE FROM THE INDONESIAN PRESS). AND BY BARRING NEWSWEEK CORRESPONDENTS, THE JAKARTA REGIME IS REDUCING THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO 3 MILLION NEWSWEEK READERS IN AMERICA.

BUT THE REAL POINT IS THAT THINGS WON'T STOP THERE. IF THE INDONESIANS GET AWAY WITH STOMPING ON NEWSWEEK, THEY WILL IN DUE COURSE EITHER BAN OR BRING TO HEEL ALL OTHER FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS WHICH ATTEMPT TO REPORT ON INDONESIA HONESTLY. AND, IF SUHARTO CAN BRING THE U.S. PRESS TO HEEL, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL FERDY MARCOS, HARRY LEE, PARK CHUNG-HEE AND GOD KNOWS WHO ELSE WILL FOLLOW SUIT. (AS YOU KNOW, MARCOS AND LEE HAVE ALREADY MADE SPORADIC EFFORTS TO MUZZLE THE FOREIGN PRESS).

AT THE RISK OF SOUNDING EMOTIONAL ABOUT MY PROFESSION, I
WILL TELL YOU THAT I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE MAINTENANCE

AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS EVERYWHERE DEPENDS UPON THE
FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION. AND, FOR THAT REASON, I AM
CONVINCED THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, IF IT IS TO BE
TRUE TO ITS AVOWED GOALS ON THE WORLD SCENE, MUST RISE TO
THE DEFENSE OF FREE INTERNATIONAL NEWS ORGANIZATIONS JUST
AS QUICKLY AND HEARTILY AS IT RISES TO THE DEFENSE OF
ANDREI SAKHAROV.

I'M AFRAID THIS HAS BEGUN TO SOUND LIKE A SERMON -- AND I
KNOW YOU DON'T NEED CONVERTING. SO LET ME CONCLUDE ON A
PRAGMATIC NOTE BY SAYING THAT I THINK IT MIGHT WORK
WONDERS IF SOMEONE IN WASHINGTON PUT A LITTLE HEAT ON
AMBASSADOR ROESLAN AND IF AMBASSADOR NEWSOM IN JAKARTA
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 071506

COULD HAVE A QUIET WORD WITH ADMIRAL SUDOMO. AND IF
ANYONE FEELS THE NEED OF FURTHER DOCUMENTATION, I'D BE
HAPPY TO SUPPLY IT. UNQUOTE.

3. I AM IMPRESSED WITH HIS ARGUMENTS ABOUT FREEDOM OF
THE PRESS ALTHOUGH I CANNOT JUDGE THE ACCURACY OF HIS
LETTER. AS A CONTRIBUTING EDITOR OF NEWSWEEK UNTIL
JANUARY OF THIS YEAR, I THINK I COULD RAISE ISSUE IN AN
INFORMAL WAY WITH APPROPRIATE PEOPLE IN JAKARTA. I KNOW
THAT YOU ARE ALREADY WORKING ON THIS GENERAL PROBLEM
AND WILL WANT TO DISCUSS WITH YOU HOW BEST TO MAKE THE
POINT. YOU MAY WISH TO FORWARN INDONESIAN OFFICIALS THAT
THIS SUBJECT IS OF CONCERN TO US, AND THAT I WILL WANT
TO RAISE IT.

4. WE WILL BE SENDING SEPTTEL REGARDING OTHER ASPECTS
OF MY VISIT.
CHRISTOPHER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CORRUPTION, MAGAZINES, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, CAT-A
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE071506
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RHOLBROOKE:CCH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: P840070-0904, P800020-0127, N770002-0352
Format: TEL
From: STATE SS
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977031/aaaaaasp.tel
Line Count: 157
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b28b07ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY, NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2932735
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CHANGED> GWR 20040428
Subject: INDONESIA BAN ON NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE
TAGS: PINT, SOPN, ID, NEWSWEEK INTL
To: JAKARTA WHITE HOUSE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b28b07ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009